

VZCZCXRO8508
RR RUEHPA
DE RUEHPA #0031 0261913
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 261913Z JAN 10
FM AMEMBASSY PRAIA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 1927
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0070
INFO RUEHPA/AMEMBASSY PRAIA 2878

UNCLAS PRAIA 000031

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR AF/W

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [CV](#)

SUBJECT: CAPE VERDE EXPRESSES SOLIDARITY FOR HAITI POST-EARTHQUAKE

REF: STATE 4854

¶1. (U) On January 21, DCM followed up informal messages to the MFA with a demarche giving detailed information on the U.S. support package for Haiti. In the meeting with MFA America's Desk Oriana Gonsalves, we shared the information and asked about Cape Verde's response. Gonsalves told us that Cape Verde had sent letters of solidarity to the government of Haiti and the UN immediately following the first earthquake, but was not offering financial or technical assistance to Haiti at this time because of local budgetary constraints.

¶2. (U) The Embassy also shared detailed information, including the joint cooperation statement in Portuguese, with local media contacts per reftel request. In public discussions, we have noted that Haiti's two earthquakes have not become a headlining news item -- Cape Verdean news outlets limited coverage to brief capsules. Most Cape Verdeans rely on Portuguese or Brazilian news outlets for international news, and as a result there is not a strong appetite for Haiti updates in the local market. Nevertheless, Embassy contacts have expressed full support for the U.S. crisis response effort and we are not aware of any criticism against the U.S. assistance approach.

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